



Lake Michigan Fact Sheet

SUCCESS AROUND LAKE MICHIGAN

From preserving pristine areas to cleaning up areas contaminated with hazardous waste, people around Lake Michigan are working together to care for this great resource. The partnerships that have developed among communities, businesses, and different levels of government have resulted in successful efforts to restore and protect habitats that are vital for the support of healthy and diverse communities of plants, fish, and wildlife, for our future. There are many groups and partnerships that exist within the Lake Michigan basin. Here is a small sampling of partnership activities in the Lake Michigan region.

Partnerships for Restoration and Protection:

Chicago Wilderness

In an unprecedented collaborative effort, 34 conservation-conscious organizations joined forces in April 1996 to restore, protect, and preserve the Chicago Wilderness, more than 200,000 acres of metropolitan-area natural land. The Chicago Wilderness region stretches from the Chiwaukee Prairie in southeast Wisconsin, around the southwest tip of Lake Michigan, through northeast Illinois, and across northern Indiana to the Dunes. The region includes some of the finest tallgrass prairies and open oak woodlands in the Midwest. The 34 member organizations include local, State, and Federal governments, research and education institutions, landowners, and conservation groups. Most member organizations offer opportunities for community support and public involvement in preserving and restoring existing natural areas. Through this united effort, Chicago Wilderness will have the strength to be more effective and to reach broader audiences. It hopes to serve as a model for similar urban conservation efforts worldwide.

Leelanau Conservancy, Leelanau County, MI

Established in 1988, the Leelanau Conservancy has been able to recruit 1,700 members (which represents a good percentage of the adult population of the county). Its goal is to preserve land and water resources of Leelanau County, Michigan. In carrying out its mission, the Conservancy acquires land, works with private landowners to protect land, and works with local and state units of government to own and manage land. A recent \$800,000 project resulted in the preservation of an entire bluff and its associated 4,000 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline. The Conservancy also boasts a very successful and cost-effective water quality monitoring program of inland lakes and streams which utilizes the volunteer efforts of committed citizens. It has collected and analyzed more than five years of data, and now, through additional volunteer efforts, will be able to project trends necessary for planning purposes.

Ivanhoe Dune and Swale, IN

Dune and swale are being restored at this 100-acre preserve in Indiana through the efforts of

volunteers and the partnership of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and the Nature Conservancy. Volunteers remove trash left by midnight dumpers, remove exotic plant species, provide habitat for the endangered Karner blue butterfly, and plant native vegetation in disturbed areas.

Door County Conservation Initiative, WI

The goal of this project is to initiate and facilitate conservation activities on existing natural areas and on those remaining unprotected, high quality natural areas of the Door Peninsula, WI. Primary activities of the project have included conducting field inventory and historical research of several unexplored natural areas, as well as creating or strengthening ties with landowners, the local land trust, lake and property owners associations, academic institutions, and government agencies. A major product of this initiative has been the protection of 110 acres of critical uplands at the north end of Kangaroo Lake. Several other tracts, consisting of 180 acres, have been protected at the site through verbal landowner agreements.

Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Initiative, MI

The Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Initiative was formed in 1991 to protect the water quality of Grand Traverse Bay and the surrounding water resources. The Initiative is using a partnership approach and is based on watersheds. More than 90 organizations and 200 contributors are advancing the Initiative's work to lessen non-point source pollution. More than 35 teachers and 1,000 students are conducting stream assessments and water quality tests. Twenty area resort owners are participating in the Initiative's water conservation program. The Initiative publishes a State of the Bay report every two years and a quarterly newsletter.

Partnerships for Cleanups:

Manistique River and Harbor Site, Manistique, MI

Sawdust in the river and harbor from the saw milling era is now contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and heavy metals. EPA, local residents, and industries discussed possible steps to clean up the sediments. After a successful small-scale dredging project undertaken by EPA in the North Bay, the parties decided to dredge the river and harbor. This community-supported agreement will result in the cleanup of longstanding contamination.

Grand Calumet Cooperative Project, IN

EPA and IDEM are working with private property owners along the Grand Calumet River and Indiana Harbor Canal where the presence of petroleum products on the surface water is a concern. The participating companies include AMOCO Corporation, Mobil Oil, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), Phillips Pipeline Company, and Safety-Kleen Corporation. These companies have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with EPA and IDEM outlining actions they will take to make sure petroleum products do not move from their properties along the top of the ground water into the Canal and ultimately into Lake Michigan. Safety-Kleen and NIPSCO completed monitoring studies and determined that their properties are not sources of petroleum products on the surface water. The remaining companies are proceeding with activities to eliminate petroleum contamination. This project is demonstrating that regulatory agencies and industry can work together in achieving environmental protection without having to rely on traditional regulatory approaches.

Outboard Marine Corp. Site, Waukegan, IL

Between 1990 and 1993, Outboard Marine Corporation, removed over 1 million pounds of contaminated sediments--96 percent of the PCB contamination--making it one of the world's largest PCB cleanups. Outboard Marine paid for the total cost of the cleanup with EPA providing technical and planning assistance. The site sparked community activism with the formation of the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG). The CAG is actively pursuing shoreline redevelopment by working with a local bank, which holds the property title of a closed salvage yard, to resolve environmental concerns about the site. In addition, the CAG helped obtain access from private businesses and federal grant money to install monitoring wells in an area south of the harbor.

Cedar Creek Sediment Cleanup, WI

PCB-contaminated sediment in Cedar Creek, a tributary to the Milwaukee River, contributes to the deterioration of water quality and a balanced ecosystem in this area. In 1994, Mercury Marine voluntarily cleaned up Ruck Pond, the most upstream contaminated site. Ruck Pond had PCB concentrations as high as 150,000 parts per million (concentrations over 50 parts per million are considered hazardous). The cleanup goal was the removal, to the extent possible, of all the PCB-contaminated sediment. Approximately 5,900 cubic meters of sediment were removed and post-removal monitoring indicates that the effort was a success. Water quality modeling predicts, and monitoring planned for 1997 is expected to confirm, that fish tissue PCB concentrations have dropped from concentrations in excess of 30 parts per million, to concentrations less than 2 parts per million.

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